Dewan's reply.—I am unable to give any reply with regard to *kudivila* and other matters, as so many records have to be looked into and as you have not given me previous notice.

In regard to the works connected with the fresh water channel, the Chief Engineer has been instructed to complete them early.

32. Supply of salt for the Muvattupuzha taluk from the Munambam depot instead of from the Alleppey Port Salt depot as at present.

Mr. J. Padmanabha Kammatti (Member, Muvattupuzha Taluk) said that, as the result of a conversation he had with the Excise Commissioner on the subject of his representation, the latter had agreed to consider his request favourably, and that, therefore, he did not wish to press his request at the Assembly.

33. Evils arising from the use of intoxicants and the desirability of Government adopting remedial measures.

Mr. R. Raman Pillai (Member, Quilon Taluk) stated that, although he had made representations on that very subject in some previous sessions of the Assembly, the only step taken by the Government in the interests of temperance was to change the hours of the sale of liquors from 6 A. M. to 9 P. M. to 6 A. M. to 8 P. M.

The Member pointed out that all over the world the Governments were co-operating with the people in their attempt to put down the drink evil and said that he was gratified to know that the Travancore Government also realised that the use of intoxicants would undermine the moral and material welfare of the people and that their avowed policy was based upon such realisation. Certain activities of the Government, however, had led the people to doubt whether the Government were not doing just the reverse of what they declared it to be their policy in that matter. The Member referred to the following by way of illustrations :—

(1) The Ezhava leaders of the anti-tapping movement were being harassed by the Government and steps were being taken to train men of other classes in the profession of tapping.

(2) The men who tried to prevent the sale of abkari shops were being proceeded against under Section 90 of the Criminal Procedure Code and confidential orders were being issued to the Magistrates to see that such cases were disposed of expeditiously.

(3) Mr. Madhavan, a Vakil of the Haripad Munsiff's Court, was arrested and prosecuted for preaching temperance.

(4) Mr. Kesavan, an Inspector of the Excise Department, was placed on special duty to conduct the auction sale of abkari shops.

The Member thought that it was the duty of the Government to associate themselves with all movements to suppress the drink evil. He quoted the example of America where absolute prohibition was said to prevail and also some of the Indian States whose Governments were co-operating with the people in their fight against the demon of drink. A similar duty was cast upon the Travancore Government also and the Member urged the adoption of the necessary measures for bringing about temperance among the people. The apprehension that prohibition would cause a fall in the State revenue could not be entertained in the light of the fact that a sober population which did not waste its earnings would be better able to stand the strain of heavier taxation.

The Member then suggested the adoption of the following measures:—

(1) the non-intervention of the Government in the anti-tapping movement headed by Ezhavas ;

(2) the administration of the Excise Department on lines calculated to reduce the sale of intoxicants, including not only toddy and arrack, but also opium and ganja ;

(3) the early adoption of the policy of "local option" by Municipalities ;

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(4) the gradual reduction in the number of the abkari shops;

(5) restriction of the hours of the sale of intoxicants;

(6) the abolition of the Nagercoil Distillery;

(7) the prohibition of the import of opium and ganja and of foreign liquors; and

(8) the enactment of a law penalising the use of intoxicants by persons under 18 years of age.

Dewan's reply.—The drink question is a question which is engaging the attention of Governments all over the world, and you know that it is engaging the attention of this Government also. In reply to a resolution brought before the Legislative Council at its last meeting, the Government said that it would ask the Excise Commissioner to investigate the matter very carefully and to suggest measures which would minimise the drink evil. I do not think, therefore, that I should say anything more in regard to it except that it will engage the very serious attention of the Government and their officers.

You have made a number of suggestions on the subject of excise administration. Such suggestions are made everywhere and are being considered everywhere. Here also they are being considered.

You admit that the Government have enunciated their policy in this matter with a sense of responsibility, but at the same time you say that there are certain activities of the Government which lead you to the conclusion that the Government are encouraging the drink evil. You mention two or three matters and draw your inference from them that the Government are actually encouraging the drink evil. I must say that you are not justified in drawing such an inference. You refer to the promptitude with which Magistrates are disposing of cases connected with the movement. I can see no harm in Magistrates disposing of their work promptly. You refer to the case relating to a Vakil of Haripad, which is still *sub judice*; you refer to the deputation of Excise Inspector Mr. Kesavan on special duty; you refer to certain rumours, and, lastly, you also refer to certain security cases which have been taken and are expected to be taken in circumstances in which a breach of the peace is apprehended. You have not established that, in connection with the anti-tapping movement or the sale of liquor shops, there have not been attempts to intimidate or commit unlawful acts or instigate peaceful citizens to commit them. This is the primary duty of the Government to maintain law and order. From the one or two measures which Government have taken to discharge this elementary duty you cannot jump to the conclusion that Government are encouraging the drink evil.

III. PROTECTION.

Legislation, Criminal and Civil Justice.

34. Need for exempting cardamom ryots from taking out licenses want of timely sion of guns.

Mr. S. P. Sultan Ahamad Budrudin Rowther (Member, Dev ventilating the that formerly there was no Arms Regulation in the country, and e disposal of cases introduced subsequently and Rules framed thereunder, cardamom not settled in civil ing a tax of Rs. 100 and above were exempted from the pro suits was inordinately the provisions of the revised Arms Rules, however, only proper supervision of the Rs. 500 and above could claim the benefit of such exemptions which the liti- Member's opinion, was a grievance to the other ryots who ficulties in the execution of plantations from the ravages of wild animals and from t stly and troublesome that adjoining British frontier. He requested that, as before, rather than resort to the a tax of Rs. 100 and above might be exempted from the system of supervision of the gulation and the Rules thereunder.

Dewan's reply.—The object of taking out licenties. He, therefore, requested the Government to know how many licenses have beensal of cases and for the more there are in the country. This information is esser examined the license register at Devicolam last yea ce of Magistrates, especially the ing courts till late in the evening, ntinued.

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